सत्यमेव जयते

Nature Protects if She is Protected

ENVIRONMENT EDUCATION PROGRAMME

LiFE
Lifestyle for Environment

# Environment Education Programme

## Operational Manual




Central Sector Scheme

**ENVIRONMENT EDUCATION, AWARENESS, RESEARCH AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT**

November 2026




Operational Manual for Implementation
of

# ENVIRONMENT EDUCATION PROGRAMME

under the Central Sector Scheme

# ENVIRONMENT EDUCATION, AWARENESS, RESEARCH AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

November 2026

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Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change
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## 1. Introduction and Background

*"Today's children are the global citizens of tomorrow. They influence their families and shape their attitudes, and thereby the society. So, children, during their formative years (5 to 14), when they are most receptive to messages and information, need to be educated about the environment and the long-term impact of our present actions. This will have a cascading effect on society"* – working on this rationale, Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change (MoEFCC) formulated the programme – 'National Green Corps (NGC)' in 2001-02, for promoting Eco-club formation and activities in schools across the country. The NGC programme was implemented as a flagship programme of MoEFCC for non-formal environment education till 2021-2022.

As the concept of Eco-clubs gained popularity over the years, various States/ Union Territories (UT) and education boards began adopting it across the country. The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) issued circular in 2019 instructing all the schools to mandatorily create Eco-clubs in schools. The Department of School Education & Literacy (DoSEL), Ministry of Education (MoE) also started extending support to schools specifically for Eco-clubs under their various plan schemes. Formation of Eco-clubs and Nature-clubs are promoted by various State/UT Governments as well. Today, the National Education Policy (NEP), 2020 envisages Eco-clubs as an integral part of school as well as higher education in the country.

Building on the strengths of NGC and its network of Eco-clubs, MoEFCC undertook a major restructuring of its non-formal environment education framework as part of the appraisal prior to the 15$^{th}$ Finance Commission cycle. This transformation as 'Environment Education Programme (EEP)' under the revamped Central Sector Umbrella Scheme 'Environment Education, Awareness, Research and Skill Development (EEARSD)' was done ensuring seamless alignment with the evolving formal education ecosystem - the NEP 2020 and the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) as well as with the Mission LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment). The guidelines of EEP were rolled out in tandem with Mission LiFE guidelines in FY 2022-23.

The implementation of EEP witnessed a massive transition from symbolic activities like rallies, cleanliness drives, plantation drives, etc., to focussed training on sustainable lifestyle aimed at skilling for behavioural change. Experiential learning through hands-on activities and nature experience were the key features of this programme. Concerted efforts to impart knowledge of issues, action strategies and action skills as envisaged in the Integrated Model of Responsible Environmental Behaviour put forward by Hines et al. (1986)[1] defined the guiding principle of EEP.

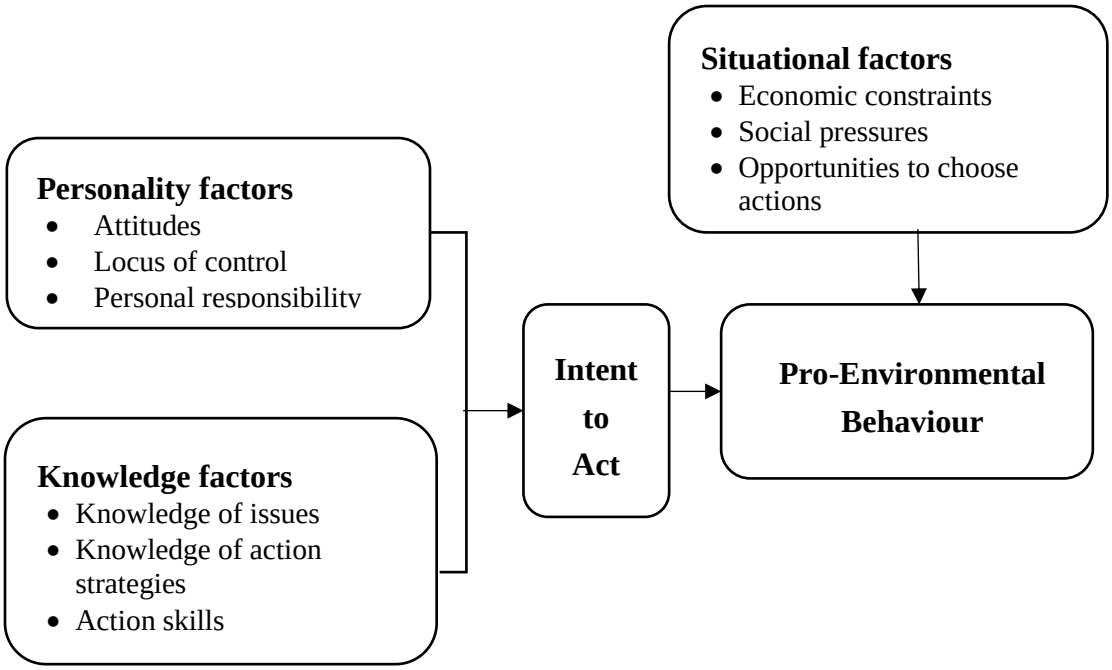



**Fig.1.** Integrated Model of Responsible Environmental Behaviour *(Hines et al., 1986)*

The appraisal of the EEARSD scheme conducted prior to the commencement of the 16th Finance Commission period (FY 2026-27 to 2030-31) recommended to build on the strong momentum gained by EEP and to unlock the programme's full potential by embedding environmental education more deeply into the school system, simplifying administrative workflows, and empowering teachers with continuous institutional support and training.

[1] Hines, J.M., Hungerford, H.R. & Tomera, A.N. (1986–87). *Analysis and synthesis of research on responsible pro-environmental behavior: a meta-analysis*, The Journal of Environmental Education, 18(2), pp. 1–8.

Accordingly, the improved EEP proposes an ambitious transformation from an Ecoclub-based approach into a **Whole School Approach** by ensuring that environmental learning extends beyond an Eco-club to involve all students, teachers, and the school system. The initiatives would be synergised with the flagship national missions such as Mission LiFE and Viksit Bharat@2047, while advancing commitments to multiple Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

## 2. Alignment with Mission LiFE

Conceived by Hon'ble Prime Minister of India at the UNFCCC COP26 and formally launched alongside UN Secretary-General António Guterres on October 20, 2022, Mission LiFE (Lifestyle for Environment)[2] was introduced as an India-led global mass movement designed to mobilize individuals worldwide as "Pro-Planet People" to drive climate action through sustainable daily habits. Its core objective is to transition society away from "mindless and destructive consumption" toward "mindful and deliberate resource utilization," by encouraging simple, scalable actions in daily life, such as conserving energy, reducing waste, and eliminating single-use plastics, etc.

Mission LiFE organizes its 75 individual, measurable environment- friendly actions across seven (7) primary themes viz., Save Energy, Save Water, Say No to Single-Use Plastics, Adopt Sustainable Food Systems, Reduce Waste (Swachhata Actions), Adopt Healthy Lifestyles and Reduce E-Waste.

EEP is closely aligned with the objectives of Mission LiFE and encourages students, teachers and schools to adopt sustainable and environment-friendly practices in their daily lives. Activities under EEP promote the seven themes of Mission LiFE. Through experiential learning and school-level activities, EEP seeks to sensitize students towards environmental sustainability and encourage sustained behavioural change in their daily lives.

[2] NITI Aayog. (2022). *LiFE: Lifestyle for Environment*. Government of India.

## 3. Aim and Objectives

The Environment Education Programme (EEP) aims to supplement the efforts of Ministry of Education in the formal education front, through varied pedagogical initiatives to impart non-formal environment education and awareness about Mission LiFE. The transformation from an Ecoclub-based approach into a Whole School Approach as a part of the improved EEP envisages to integrate environmental and Mission LiFE themes into teaching-learning processes, school management practices, campus planning, and community outreach. The model encourages every teacher to blend modern scientific principles and the wisdom of traditional Indian knowledge to contribute through subject-linked activities and green campus practices to equip the next generation with sustainable solutions to combat the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution. It envisages embedding environmental responsibility into curriculum, pedagogy and culture, thereby making sustainability a shared norm rather than the responsibility of a small group.

The Programme was appraised by the Standing Finance Committee (SFC) for EEARSD Scheme on June 22, 2026 and approved by Hon'ble Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change along with a Schematic Guidelines on September 1, 2026.

The objectives of the programme are:

(i) **To embed a Whole School Approach** to sustainability, ensuring that environmental responsibility becomes a shared norm across school systems, management practices, and school culture.

(ii) **To build the capacity of teachers** to integrate environmental concepts, sustainability themes, and Mission LiFE principles into classroom teaching and school activities.

(iii) **To sensitize and skill students** to adopt environmentally responsible behaviours and to carry the messages into the wider community through integrated, action-oriented Mission LiFE projects.

(iv) **To provide experiential and nature-based learning opportunities** through nature camps and vacation programmes that deepen students' connection with nature and reinforce real-world environmental understanding.

## 4. Implementing Agencies

The implementation of this Programme can be done either at Central or State/ UT level. Accordingly, the Implementing Agencies (IA) can be any agency or autonomous body/ institutes of Central or State Government/ UT Administration having a mandate related to education/ environment. Implementing agency would be nominated by the respective authorities like Central/ State Government/ UT Administration and finalized by this Ministry with due approval of Secretary (EF&CC).

This programme is not open to any other agency/ body/ institute other than those of Central Government/ State Government/ UT Administration. The designated IAs may implement the programme either at State-level or through their sub-agencies at regional/ zonal/ district or other levels. Designation of more than one IA for a State/UT would also be permitted for larger States/ UTs for ensuring better coverage. Phase-wise implementation focussing on particular regions/ segments may be adopted by IAs based on budget allocations.

## 5. Implementation Strategy

The Whole School Approach of EEP would be implemented through three integrated components:

I. **EEP-Experiential Nature Learning Programme** for students for providing them experiential learning and connecting them with the nature.

II. **EEP-Mission LiFE Projects** as integrated projects in schools that sensitize, skill and motivate students to adopt sustainable lifestyle through hands-on/ practical actions such as waste segregation, energy and water conservation, waste-to-wealth initiatives, and community outreach, implemented through two sub-components, Awareness followed by Action:

    i. **Awareness Component** (EEP-Teacher Training Workshops)
    ii. **Action Component** (EEP-Integrated Projects)

III. **Environmental Campaigns** for participation of students in national environmental campaigns, including Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam and other campaigns aligned with environmental conservation and Mission.

For **EEP-Experiential Nature Learning Programmes**, States and IAs will independently identify and map schools/ Eco-clubs with nearby Zoological Parks, National Parks, Protected Areas, Tiger Reserves, Ramsar Sites, Botanical Gardens and premier environmental/ forestry institutes. To support this exercise, MoEFCC will share a list of such institutes with the IAs. Based on the mapped list shared by the IAs, MoEFCC will facilitate preparation of visit schedules in consultation with the Central Zoo Authority (CZA), National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) and other relevant institutions. Guided exposure visits will enable students to connect classroom learning with real world environmental and conservation practices. These opportunities will be extended by the IAs to the best-performing schools as an incentive to strengthen meaningful environmental action. Schools which demonstrate active participation in EEP-Mission LiFE Projects, adopt effective green campus practices, show strong teacher-student engagement and undertake impactful community outreach, etc. may be prioritised. By linking performance with experiential learning opportunities, the programme encourages healthy competition and motivates schools to institutionalise sustainable practices. These programmes will serve as a reward as well as an enriching learning experience, allowing students from high-performing schools to deepen their connection with nature, apply their classroom learning in real-world settings, and develop stronger pro-environmental attitudes and skills.

For implementing the component **EEP-Mission LiFE Projects,** IAs need to seek proposals from schools, targeting priority districts/ areas as identified for the year in consultation with MoEFCC. Such proposals from schools may include proposals for funding both the sub-components – Awareness Component (EEP- Teacher Training workshops) and Action Component (EEP-Integrated Projects).

The **Awareness** Component **(EEP-Teacher Training Workshops)** would be organized by schools following the Whole School Approach with a vision to empower the entire teaching staff of a school with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to integrate environmental concepts into everyday teaching and school activities. Resource persons for conducting such Workshops may be either experts from the IA concerned or may be sourced from EIACP[3] Centres and other relevant expert organizations.

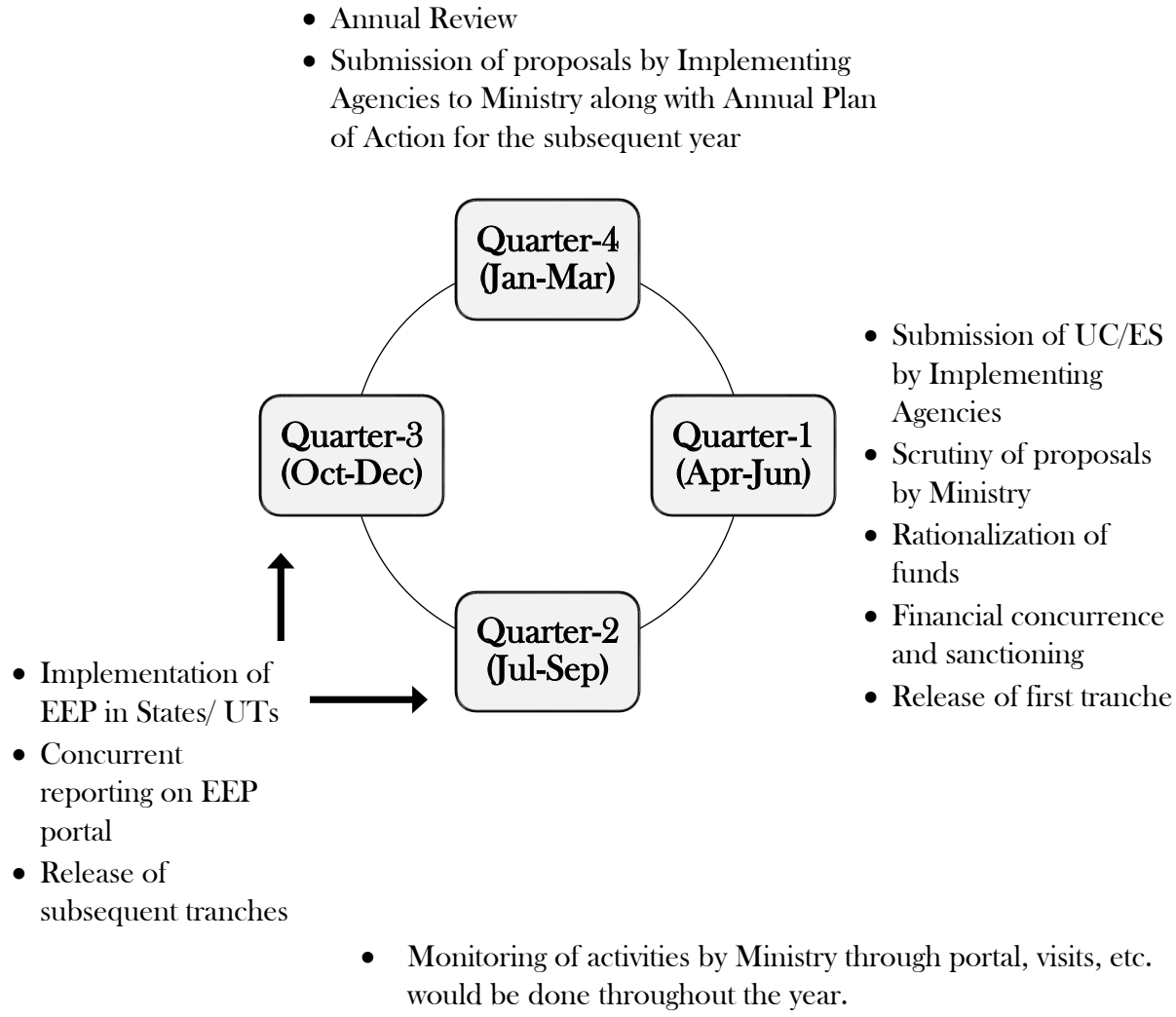
[3] *Environmental Information, Awareness, Capacity building and livelihood Programme (EIACP)* is another sub-scheme under the Central Sector Scheme EEARSD.

Schools so strengthened with empowered teachers would transform the awareness into action through the Action Component (**EEP-Integrated Projects**). These would be integrated projects and may include hands-on activities, exhibitions, thematic campaigns, hackathons or similar competitions and community outreach, which would help in transforming environmental learning into practical, action-oriented experiences for students. These will allow students to apply classroom knowledge to real-life situations, such as waste segregation, water and energy conservation, pollution reduction, and waste-to-wealth initiatives, thereby imparting both knowledge and hands-on skills. These projects will foster teamwork, problem solving, and creativity while encouraging behavioural change through simple, achievable actions. In schools, these projects can create a culture of sustainability, strengthen teacher-student collaboration, and provide visible improvements in campus environmental practices. Extension of activities under EEP-Mission LiFE Projects to community outreach would help target beneficiaries take environmental responsibility beyond the school and inspire change in families and neighbourhoods.

Under **Environmental campaigns**, schools/Ecoclubs shall participate in national environmental campaigns, including ***Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam*** and other campaigns aligned with environmental conservation and Mission LiFE. Schools/Ecoclubs shall identify suitable areas for plantation in consultation with the concerned Divisional Forest Officer (DFO)/ Forest Department particularly around special events like World Environment Day (WED), etc. Schools/Eco-Clubs shall also undertake other environmental campaigns and activities as and when planned or notified by the Government of India.

All the initiatives under EEP would be organized/ undertaken under the banner of 'Environment Education Programme, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change' and the logo of EEP, Mission LiFE and MoEFCC would be invariably used in the banners, posters, resource materials, publications, etc. released as a part of these initiatives.

## Annual Calendar for EEP Implementation




## 6. Target Beneficiaries

The target beneficiaries of EEP are primarily children across the country. The Implementing Agencies would target schools with an aim to build teacher capacity, fostering student-led Mission LiFE projects, strengthening school-community linkages, and creating sustained experiential learning opportunities following a Whole School Approach.

Environment Education through EEP would be accessible to all students in schools across the country. Nevertheless, schools in non-metro cities, aspirational districts, rural areas, border villages, etc. will be given special emphasis during the 16$^{th}$ FC period. Efforts will also be taken to saturate schools in and around national parks, sanctuaries, wetlands, etc., in a phased manner, with an aim to increase conservation activities in these areas.

EEP will also integrate Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion (GEDSI) principles by ensuring equitable access for girls and boys, learners with disabilities, and students from tribal, rural, and socially marginalised communities through inclusive activities, adaptable materials, and supportive teaching practices.

## 7. Grants-in-Aid and Proposal Submission

Grants-in-aid for EEP would be **non-recurring** in nature. This would be sanctioned to each IA on the basis of Annual Action Plan consisting of a calendar of activities to be organised by the IAs, directly or through schools, for the entire year. The activities under the Annual Action Plan will be subject to, *inter alia*, submission of requisite documents, fulfilment of mandatory terms & conditions and availability of funds. IAs need to aspire for coverage of all schools/ units over the years in a phased manner. Phase-wise implementation focussing on particular regions/ segments may be adopted based on budget allocations. Number of schools/ units and number of beneficiaries to be targeted needs to be suitably factored in while planning the implementation.

Grants-in-Aid would be sanctioned to the IAs, in accordance with the General Financial Rules (GFR) and related instructions of the Government of India, as amended/ issued from time to time. The broad heads for sanctioning grants to IAs and the maximum limit for such grants would be as given in the table below:

| S.No. | Particulars | Maximum Limit for Grants-in-aid |
|---|---|---|
| a. | Financial assistance for organizing EEP-Experiential Nature Learning Programme | Rs. 40 lakh per State[$] |
| b. | Financial assistance for EEP-Mission LiFE Projects<br>i. EEP-Teacher Training Workshops (Awareness Component)<br>ii. EEP-Integrated Projects* (Action Component) | Rs. 15 lakh per district |
| c. | Administrative charges (10% of a+b) on reimbursement basis[@] | On actual basis, not exceeding 10% of the total expenditure incurred against previous grant for organizing/ extending support to (a) EEP-Experiential Nature Learning Programme, (b) EEP-Mission LiFE Projects |

Notes:

$ **EEP -Experiential Nature Learning Programme camps** *could be either a 1-day programme or 2 to 3-days residential programme. The maximum assistance to a State in a year would be upto Rs. 40 lakh for twenty 3-day camps each of 50 students. In case of camps/ programmes of lesser number of days/ students, grants would be reduced accordingly. An illustrative calculation for camps/ programmes of lesser number of days is given below:*

| **EEP -Experiential Nature Learning Programme camps** | ***Maximum Grant*** |
|---|---|
| *1-day camp (1 day)* | *Rs. 800/- per student* |
| *2-day camp (2 days + 1 night)* | *Rs. 2400/- (i.e., Rs. 800 *3) per student* |
| *3- day camp (3 days + 2 nights)* | *Rs. 4000/- (i.e., Rs. 800 *5) per student* |

*Students to teacher ratio of 10:1 may be considered for nature camps under Experiential Learning Programmes.*

* *An indicative list of permissible EEP-Integrated Projects is given at* **Annexure-I.** *This list would be reviewed annually by MoEFCC and finalized based on emerging topics, focus areas and also in consultation with the Department of School Education and Literacy (DoSEL), Ministry of Education to avoid duplication in activities. IAs may request MoEFCC for addition of any new innovative activity to this list, which will be considered on a case-to-case basis.*

@ *For re-imbursement of administrative charges, IAs need to duly reflect these expenses in the Utilization Certificate (UC) and Expenditure Statement (ES) submitted to the Ministry.*

Proposals to be considered for sanction of grant-in aid are to be submitted by the IAs to the Joint Secretary/ Advisor, Environment Education (EE) Division, MoEFCC through the dedicated EEP portal. A sample format is given at **Annexure-II**, which shall be reviewed and amended from time-to-time, as required, with the approval of Joint Secretary/ Advisor concerned.

Further, the Programme Division in MoEFCC, in conjunction with the IAs may organise National/ Regional workshops/ meets/ hackathon/ exhibitions/ competitions/ campaigns etc., as considered necessary for effective implementation of the programme. Fund requirement for these activities would be considered on a case-to-case basis.

Also, in conjunction with DoSEL, NCERT, EIACP etc., the Programme Division may seek to develop Teaching Learning Material (TLM) on environment/ Mission LiFE. MoEFCC shall host and regularly update curated TLM/ resource material on the dedicated EEP portal. These resources will encompass materials contributed by IAs and expert institutions, as well as need-based content developed to address emerging environmental priorities. Best practices and success stories from States/ UTs shall also be showcased through the EEP portal for peer-to-peer learning. Fund requirement for these activities also would be considered on a case-to-case basis.

## 8. Performance Reporting

IAs would utilize the grant only for the purpose for which it has been granted and submit annual UC and ES as per the General Financial Rules and related instructions of the Government of India, along with a comprehensive Activity Report, within the prescribed timelines.

Reporting of financial data is to be done through portals like Public Financial Management Systems (PFMS) as mandated by the Ministry of Finance, Government of India. Reporting of physical performance is to be done through EEP portal/ Prakriti CONNECT App. Activities are to be uploaded in this portal by the IA, in case of initiatives organized directly by them, and by schools, in cases where financial support has been extended to schools by IAs.

In addition, IAs have to submit periodic/ activity-wise reports whenever the Ministry requests the same. Such Activity Reports should invariably give quantitative account of the output and outcome indicators of the programme and a brief account on the impact of the programme.

Output and outcome indicators of EEP are as given in the table below:

| Output | Indicators | Outcome | Indicators |
|---|---|---|---|
| Organizing EEP-Experiential Nature Learning Programme/ EEP-Teacher Training Workshops/ EEP-Integrated Projects | Number of EEP-Experiential Nature Learning Programme supported | Upskilling of teachers and sensitization / skilling of children for adopting sustainable lifestyle | Number of schools implementing EEP-Mission LiFE Projects |
| | Number of EEP-Teachers Training Workshops organized | | Number of teachers trained |
| | Number EEP-Integrated Action Projects supported | | Number of students participated in EEP-Mission LiFE Projects and EEP-Experiential Nature Learning Programme |

## 9. Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning (MEL) Framework

The Monitoring, Evaluation, and Learning (MEL) framework for EEP includes the following:

(i) National Steering Committee chaired by Secretary (EF&CC) to oversee and steer the implementation of EEP.

The National Steering Committee (NSC) shall be chaired by Secretary (EF&CC) and may have representatives from DoSEL/ thematic Divisions of MoEFCC with related mandates and representatives from two best performing IAs, Joint Secretary/ Advisor of the Programme Division shall be the Member Secretary of this Committee. The NSC shall meet annually to provide strategic vision, inter-ministerial synergy, policy guidance, and national-level oversight for effective implementation and scaling of EEP.

(ii) Annual/ periodic review meetings at the level of Joint Secretary/ Advisor of the Programme Division

(iii) Evaluation Committee of experts for performance review/ evaluation and guidance to IAs during National Evaluation Workshops, which shall be organized either in Delhi or regionally in different States/ UTs to track progress, measure impact, and continuously improve the implementation of EEP in States/ UTs. Evaluation Committees shall be constituted on adhoc basis for each National Evaluation Workshops engaging subject experts, line Ministries/ Departments and thematic Divisions of MoEFCC.

(iv) Online monitoring of physical and financial performance through EEP portal, PFMS portal, Utilisation Certificate and Expenditure statement submitted by the IAs and other digital footprints. Grading of IAs and schools would be done based on performance.

(v) On-ground monitoring of activities by officers/ officials of the Ministry.

(vi) On-ground monitoring of activities, as required, to supplement findings of online monitoring mentioned at (iv) above, through a Monitoring Committee, comprising of an officer from Integrated Finance Division (IFD) or any thematic division of MoEFCC and an officer/ official of the Programme Division, as nominated by Joint Secretary/ Advisor of the Programme Division. Similar to the Evaluation Committee mentioned at (iii) above, the Monitoring Committee shall be constituted on adhoc basis and based on issues.

A mechanism for grading IAs and schools shall be developed by MoEFCC by setting clear, measurable standards for monitoring their performance and motivating continuous improvement.

Midterm/ post-implementation evaluation of the programme would be considered in consultation with the Development Monitoring and Evaluation Division (DMED) of MoEFCC. Feedback received would be considered in consultation with all stakeholders and midterm corrections would be incorporated with the approval of Secretary (EF&CC). Third party evaluation/ audit would be undertaken as per extant procedures.

The Monitoring and Coordination Cell (MCC) set up in the Programme Division of MoEFCC will assist the Division in coordinating with IAs as well as monitoring their performance, including on-ground monitoring. The manpower for MCC, viz., one Consultant 'C' and two Consultant 'B' would be engaged as per the norms and guidelines of the MoEFCC issued vide order ADMIN-43012/1/2022-P-II [E-176223] dated 15/04/2025 as amended from time to time and related instructions.

MoEFCC would be the final authority in respect all decisions regarding the implementation of EEP, including approval for designation of Implementing Agencies, sanctioning of grants-in-aid and performance evaluation.

In case of any contradiction between the provisions of this Operational Manual and the approved SFC Note, the provisions of the approved SFC Note shall prevail.

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Annexure-I

## Suggested List of Environment Education Programme (EEP) – Integrated Projects

| Mission LiFE Theme | Activities under EEP-Integrated Project |
|---|---|
| Save Energy | 1. LED bulb making/ repairing<br>2. Solar solutions<br>3. Energy audit |
| Save Water | 4. Water footprint tracking/ audit<br>5. Organic soap making |
| Say No to Single-Use Plastics | 6. Upcycling of old cloth into utility products<br>7. Cloth/ paper bag making<br>8. Paper pen making/ promotion of eco-friendly pens<br>9. Bamboo/ wood/ leaf based eco-friendly products (eg. Dona-Pattal making)<br>10. Eco-crafting from natural resources (leaves, corn husk, water hyacinth, banana fibre, palm leaves, coconut shell, etc.) |
| Adopt Sustainable Food Systems | 11. Promotion of millet based food practices<br>12. Seed ball making and guerrilla gardening<br>13. Promotion of organic farming |
| Reduce Waste (Swachhata Actions) | 14. Waste audit<br>15. Vermicomposting and organic waste management<br>16. Paper recycling/ hand-made paper/ clean paper initiatives<br>17. Eco-friendly idol making |
| Adopt Healthy Lifestyles | 18. Eco-friendly herbal colour preparation<br>19. Net-zero passbook/ Carbon footprint measurement |
| Reduce E-Waste | 20. Repair and reuse electronics (like gadgets, LED bulbs, etc.) |

**Annexure-II**

## Format for submitting proposals under Environment Education Programme (EEP) of Environment Education, Awareness, Research and Skill Development (EEARSD) scheme

*(See Section 7)*

Name of the Implementing Agency : _____

Address for communication : _____

Name of the nodal officer : _____

Contact details of the nodal officer : Email: _____

Tele: _____

Consolidated proposal:

| S. No. | Particulars of Initiatives | Maximum Funding | Proposed Amount (Rs.) |
|---|---|---|---|
| A. | Financial assistance for organizing EEP-Experiential Nature Learning Programme | Rs. 40 lakh per State | |
| B. | Financial assistance for EEP-Mission LiFE Projects<br>i. EEP-Teacher Training Workshops (Awareness Component)<br>ii. EEP-Integrated Projects (Action Component) | Rs. 15 lakh per district | |
| C. | Administrative charges | 10% of A+B on reimbursement basis | |
| **Total** | | | |

* *Details of each initiative to be entered in the EEP portal and a copy of the same to be annexed; Number of students and number of days to be specified in the case of Experiential Nature Learning Programmes.*

Certified that the information provided above is correct to the best of my knowledge and I undertake responsibility for utilization of fund, if proposal is approved, for the purpose claimed in the application.

(Signature of the Nodal Officer)
Name and Designation with seal

Date:
Place:

(Signature of the Head of Institution/Organization)
Name and Designation with seal